



**PARTNERSHIP
SUMMIT**

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Partnerships for Opening Doors

*A national summit on integrating employment
and housing strategies to prevent
and end homelessness.*



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Acknowledgements

The Butler Family Fund acknowledges with gratitude the leadership and assistance of the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in co-sponsoring Partnerships for Opening Doors - a national summit on integrating employment and housing strategies to prevent and end homelessness. [Barbara Poppe and Associates](#) provided facilitation, content development, and event support to make the Summit possible. A special thank you to Alex Highley who worked as the public policy intern with the communities. We especially acknowledge the community members of the eleven teams who participated in the Summit and developed the content for the Community Profiles contained in this publication.



Executive Summary

People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness need resources to be connected to housing and secure employment. On October 16, 2014, a national summit on integrating employment and housing strategies to prevent and end homelessness — Partnerships for Opening Doors — was convened by the [US Department of Labor](#) (DOL), the [US Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD), the [US Interagency Council on Homelessness](#) (USICH), and the [Butler Family Fund](#). The Partnerships Summit focused on the employment needs of adults in families and single adults, including individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. More than one hundred people participated, including Federal government agencies, national organizations, and teams from eleven communities. Participating communities prepared a Community Profile in order to share ideas, practices, and future plans for ending homelessness through integrated housing and employment strategies. This report compiles nine of the profiles into a single document.

Of the participating communities, three presented examples of strong collaboration between the workforce systems and the homeless assistance systems. They are using DOL-WIA funding to support employment and training activities (Department of Labor – Workforce Investment Act is a mainstream program that provides formula grants to local Workforce Investment Boards). One community has a history of collaboration using philanthropic and HUD funds to underwrite a Navigator approach for homeless families. The other communities generally appear to be at the beginning stages of partnerships between their workforce systems and the homeless assistance systems; all could identify projects targeting employment and homeless assistance even though there was no specific collaboration at the systems level.



There are many commonalities among the communities in their approach to providing services. All participant communities are at various stages of developing a regional coordinated intake and assessment system as a component of their homeless assistance system known as the Continuum of Care (CoC). CoCs promote community-coordinated responses to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and to minimize the trauma and dislocation caused to individuals, families, and communities by homelessness. All participant communities reported using a Housing First approach to quickly stabilize individuals and families in rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing, which often prioritize the chronically homeless as part of the model.

Some communities link program participants with employment specialists who are often co-located at shelters. These employment specialists assess the characteristics, needs, and skills of the individual in order to begin conversations with employers and to cultivate a job search process. This model of support is illustrated by Western MA's Secure Jobs program, which co-locates career center staff with Secure Jobs staff to expose homeless clients to an unprecedented level of career services. Another example is the Salt Lake Department of Workforce Services which stations full time staff at shelters and permanent supportive housing throughout the region. Phoenix's Homegrown Program delivers resume preparation assistance, childcare services, job coaching, and job training with opportunities for hands-on experiences; while the Minnesota FastTRAC (Training, Resources, and Credentialing) approach builds skills attuned to the needs of employers among educationally under-prepared adults.

A number of communities have developed efforts to link homeless job seekers to hiring employers. Secure Jobs in Western MA, offers incentives to businesses to hire applicants who otherwise would have been overlooked due to lack of skills or undesirable work history.



Several communities cited the need for access to flexible funds to support the unique needs of the job seeker as critical. Western MA partially attributes the success of its Secure Jobs program to the fact that funds are flexibly allocated towards services that most effectively serve each individual.

Effective communication and collaboration networks as well as common systems of data are necessary to sustain homeless support structures. In Portland, the A Home for Everyone Plan allows leaders from Worksystems, local businesses, public safety, consumers, and other stakeholders to hold seats on the governance body. Likewise, the Nashville Workforce Network brings together 90 member organizations that include CoC partners, while in Richmond, the Vice Chair of the regional CoC board serves on the WIA Board of Resource.

Communities have aligned or are working to align programs of the CoC with the local workforce, local government, nonprofits, and private partners in order to develop career models that are participant-directed. For instance, Phoenix is exploring methods of effectively informing workforce programs about CoC service delivery efforts. Similarly, the Richmond community is progressing toward incorporating mainstream workforce services into rapid re-housing programs in order to simultaneously stabilize clients' employment and housing needs. Furthermore, Richmond hopes to integrate an ad hoc homeless service task force into the Resource Partnership Team structure.

Finally, communities are pursuing and using a variety of funding sources, including WIA, VA, TANF, SNAP E&T, philanthropy, and county-specific funding. For example, the Heading Home SNAP E&T Project at the Opportunity Center in Minneapolis is a multi-agency collaboration co-locating housing and employment services and leveraging philanthropic resources from the United Way and other funders.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Los Angeles, CA

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community population	9,211,888, excluding cities of Glendale, Pasadena, and Long Beach (2013 estimates) for Los Angeles County
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	35,524 for the Los Angeles Continuum of Care PIT 2013
2013 Continuum of Care (CoC) Award	\$79,223,521
2014-15 WIA formula grant allocation plus Governor's Discretionary	\$41 million for the City; \$33.9 million for the County
Current unemployment rate	9.1% as of June, 2014

DESCRIPTION

LA County (County) is in the process of implementing several groundbreaking initiatives to coordinate housing and homeless services. The initial strategy has been to implement coordinated assessment and intervention systems that are population-specific and focused on the most vulnerable and most in need. In 2010, the United Way of Greater Los Angeles released the Home for Good Plan to end homelessness in Los Angeles. The Plan was updated in 2012 with a goal of ending chronic and veteran's homelessness by 2016.

Stakeholders have been piloting a "Coordinated Entry System" for single adults in partnership with homeless service providers, the Veterans' Administration, County Departments of Health and Mental Health Services, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the United Way and City and County Public Housing Authorities. Persons assessed by eight non-profit partner agencies are prioritized for housing. The common assessment tool used is the Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT). Outreach, place-based access, and day shelters provide street based contact, either through street outreach activities or walk-in capacity in day shelters or access centers.



During the last two years, Los Angeles Homeless Service Authority (LAHSA), the LA County CEO, Shelter Partnership, the City and County housing departments and the local TANF agency have been collaborating on the implementation of a coordinated system for homeless families with children below the age of 18. Now in its second year of implementation, the Family Solutions Centers (FSCs) are the coordinated system of entry, assessment and housing interventions for homeless and at-risk families in the County.

The FSCs use a “Housing First” approach and integrate resources from several County and City agencies in order to provide coordinated screening, triage, crisis intervention, diversion (homelessness prevention), rapid rehousing, housing-related case management and employment resources. FSCs rely on this approach both to prevent families from entering the homelessness system and to rapidly remove families from homelessness.

Each regional FSC has out stationed TANF-funded homeless case managers, TANF-funded mental health counselors and TANF-funded substance abuse counselors who provide access to specialized services in support of stable housing. Eight community-based providers experienced in the rapid rehousing model operate the coordinated FSCs. The out stationed TANF homeless case managers provide direct access to TANF and State-funded subsidized employment and training to ensure that rapidly rehoused homeless families are able to remain housed.

America’s Job Centers of California/ LA City WorkSource Centers

The City of Los Angeles (City) recently re-procured its WorkSource System and in partnership with service providers, seeks to serve 45,000 individuals in the City annually. Each of the 17 WorkSource Centers (WSCs) is required to enroll a minimum of 10% vulnerable populations, including those living with disabilities, the homeless, re-entry population and a 10% enrollment requirement for veterans. This system has been expanded with the establishment of an on-line portal, www.jobsla.org, which provides access to thousands of job opportunities statewide and in the Los Angeles region in real time.



City of Los Angeles YouthSource Centers

Funded with grants from the US Department of Labor (DOL) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the City's 16 YouthSource Centers (YSC) serve disconnected youth aged 16-21 to provide an integrated service model for clients. Working in collaboration with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the YouthSource system provides academic assessment, tutoring, computer training, counseling, mentoring, work readiness, and occupational skills training and alternative high school services in 2014.

Homeless target population

Under-employed or unemployed adults, including the homeless, are the target population for developing innovative and effective employment training and supports. General demographics for our homeless population are as follows, based on our 2013 PIT Count:

Total Groups Served in the Continuum of Care	Component Number	% of Total
Chronically Homeless Individuals	7475	21.0%
Chronically Homeless Family Units	339	1.0%
Chronically Homeless Family Members	1227	3.5%
Total Number of Veterans	4007	11.3%
Number of Female Veterans	227	0.6%
Severely Mentally Ill	9963	28.0%
Chronic Substance Abuse	11073	31.2%
Persons with HIV/AIDS	349	1.0%
Victims of Domestic Violence	3159	8.9%



COLLABORATION

Partner participation, government, nonprofit, and private sector

The city leverages strategic partnerships with education, employment training and social service providers to meet WIA legislative mandates. These mandates include specific services from various programs with at least one physical One-Stop Career Center in a Local Workforce Investment Area. Program services can be provided either at the One Stop Center or by a partner agency. The partners include the California Employment Development Department, the California Department of Rehabilitation, US Department of Veterans Affairs, LA Unified School District, LA Community College District, LA County Department of Public Social Services, and the City of LA Department of Aging. The city is working to complete MOU's with both mandatory and strategic partners, including multiple non-profit service providers for the purpose of providing clients with an Integrated Service Model. These include Goodwill Industries of Southern California, US Vets, El Proyecto del Barrio, Coalition for Responsible Community Development, Career Development Inc., Jewish Vocational Services, the Los Angeles Urban League, Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment, UAW Labor Employment and Training Corporation, the Watts Labor Community Action Committee, Youth Policy Institute and Roberts Enterprise Development Fund (REDF).

Working together

Partnership agencies are convened through the Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board (LAWIB). Formal collaboration is established through MOUs, and formal service provider contracts that are administered, managed and supported by the City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department (LA EWDD).

Traditionally, WIA funding is described in the development of an Annual Plan to meet federal guidelines for the administration of federal workforce development resources. Within the procurement process, each jurisdiction has the capacity to define, within federal guidelines, how it will serve and allocate WIA dollars to provide workforce development services.



The city is the second largest Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) in the nation since it re-procured its workforce development service network in 2013-14. During that process, the mayor and the WIB established local goals and priorities. To form an integrated service delivery model, the city has required that partner agencies enroll 10% of vulnerable populations, which include disabled persons, the homeless, a re-entry population, and a 10% enrollment requirement for veterans.

In addition to DOL Grants and WIA resources, the City works collaboratively and receives resources from LA County, the private sector, and foundations. The City's WSC partners are mandated to leverage WIA funds to enhance service delivery.

INNOVATION

The LAWIB is composed of 51 volunteers representing the private and public sector, and includes representatives from educational, labor, state and local governments, and private businesses and employers. In partnership with the Mayor and the City Council, the LAWIB provides vision, coordination and direction for the City's workforce development activities. The WIB Board develops policy and strategies to ensure business has access to a trained workforce and workers have access to quality jobs.

The LAWIB recently received notice of the award of the \$6 million Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) Grant for the Los Angeles Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise (LA-RISE). The project will stimulate job acquisition and retention for the hardest to serve population including those with a history of chronic homelessness, incarceration, veterans, and disconnected youth. A key innovation of this program is the linkage of the workforce system with social enterprise. This will be achieved through a unique partnership with the city and REDF, an agency with employment and social enterprise expertise. This grant will help the city link the mainstream workforce development system in a way that includes economic development strategies to strengthen and establish social enterprise activities for the homeless in Los Angeles.



For many years the City has worked to encourage and support economic development and social enterprise activity as part of its mixed-use supportive housing program in the urban core. This has included the collaboration of multiple agencies and partnerships with the private sector that offer program participants the opportunity for specific job training and employment.

These elements working together bring the City's workforce development efforts closer to the Continuum of Care's goal of developing a more coordinated system of housing and employment services for the chronically homeless, hard to serve and vulnerable populations.

The City of Los Angeles Affordable Housing Trust Fund helped to produce 2,981 units of permanent affordable supportive housing for the homeless and disabled, and 9,981 units of affordable units for working individuals and families. Implementing the LA Rise Grant and utilizing the social enterprise model as a first step towards long-term employment will afford Los Angeles with a unique opportunity to demonstrate success. The efficacy of social enterprise, as a workforce strategy, has been demonstrated through studies by Mathematica, MRDC, and on-going employment pilot. The study, which will be completed in December 2014, has demonstrated through mid-term report that social enterprise employment experiences stabilize workers and improve employment and livelihood outcomes. After social enterprise employment, the study demonstrates the following outcomes; owning or renting a home increased by about 75%; substance abuse during employment appeared to fall; income increased from an average of \$696 to \$1,237 per month; dependence on government transfers decreased by about two thirds to about 8%. After six months, more than 50% of transitional employees still worked at the social enterprise or transitioned to outside employment.

http://redf.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/REDF_MJS_Interim_Report_Brief_FINAL.pdf



FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

Along with the DOL \$6 million WIF Grant, funding will be leveraged through the LAWIB and the city's Economic and Workforce Development Department, EWDD, in partnership with: REDF, America's Job Centers for adults, dislocated workers and youth, Bridge Employment Social Enterprises, the LAUSD, Social Policy Research, and SE4Jobs, a national network of Employment Social Enterprises (ESEs), employers of social enterprises, bridge employers leveraging support from sector specific networks, as well as the training and supports organizations (such as LA Regional Re-entry Project). These funds are being leveraged together with the City of Los Angeles WIA Adult and Youth funds to expand the current workforce development delivery system.

Funds are leveraged through the workforce development delivery system partners for a total of \$61,184,443. http://ewdd.lacity.org/reports_wia-annualplan-p_15.html

CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

The LA: RISE strategy moves job seekers through a continuum of ESE experiences including job readiness training, personal and professional supports. Nonprofit service provider partners will refer job seekers into the ESE employment pathway. Over 500 participants will be referred over five years. Transitional employers (non-profit businesses) are the first step with the goal of transitioning participants to traditional workforce employment.

While providing a paid experience, transitional employers provide personal and professional training and support such as computer training, job search skills, and transportation support. Transitional employers are more sustainable than a traditional workforce or social service program due to the earned income generated through the program. This income offsets the costs of support and training, and decreases organizational reliance on public or philanthropic funding.



The goal of the program is to move participants from transitional employment to permanent employment in both the public and private sector. Transitional employers are non-profit businesses that offer subsidized employment. Bridge employers operate a traditional business and offer non-subsidized employment, while understanding the needs of special at-risk populations.

DATA AND RESULTS

LAHSA collects data on demographics of homeless households, including all required data elements for the CoC Homeless Management Information System, (HMIS.) They also track income and sources, and changes in their income streams (both mainstream benefits and earned income) resulting from participation in job training programs.

For programs focusing on homeless households, LAHSA tracks the number of program participants: 1) increasing employment income, during and post program participation; and 2) housing status and outcomes, at program entry, during program participation, and post program discharge.

Currently, all employment programs funded through the CoC funding or other City/County funding administered by LAHSA is tracked in the Continuum HMIS system. There is no integration between mainstream WIA programs and HMIS. Work has begun to integrate these systems in Los Angeles.

http://ewdd.lacity.org/pdfs/wib/ap15/6-APy15_PerformanceEvaluations.pdf#zoom=80



SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION

Los Angeles is working to do a better job of coordinating CoC employment efforts with WIB programs so that we capture all data that measures the effectiveness of our programs. EWDD is currently working with the homeless services authority, LAHSA, to collaborate on employment data and outcomes for the homeless population. The city has redesigned our workforce management system to include the effort to address chronically homeless and veterans' unemployment in a more focused and integrated manner. We intend to carefully collect data both short and long term about the success of our programs and will share our collective results with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

SUCCESS STORY: LOS ANGELES

<http://www.changelives.org/client-success/athina>
www.SHOP.MADEbyDWC.org.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Nashville, TN

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community population	658,602
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	2,236
2013 CoC award	\$3,234,487
2013 WIA formula grant allocation	\$8,382,700 (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth)
Current unemployment rate	6.4%

DESCRIPTION

There are two distinct initiatives in Nashville working on the elements of employment and housing as strategies to prevent and end homelessness. How's Nashville is a local campaign created collaboratively with the 100,000 Homes national effort, while the Nashville Workforce Network is a local network of employment providers and advocates. Both the How's Nashville campaign and the Nashville Workforce Network have strong commitments to collaboration and innovation. However, few formal links exist between the two, limiting the ability of either initiative to support the other.

Since summer 2013, Nashville has heavily invested in a Housing First strategy that targets people experiencing chronic homelessness by increasing access to permanent housing and wrap-around case management. How's Nashville partners have increased the housing placement rate by over 250% and have continued to prioritize permanent housing and support service resources to people experiencing chronic and vulnerable homelessness each month.

The primary service offered to individuals identified through the How's Nashville program is subsidized housing and case management support. While case management supports are helpful in maintaining the lease agreement and preventing returns to homelessness, they vary in their focus on employment.



Similarly, the Nashville Workforce Network brings together government, non-profit, and private partners focused on workforce development. The purpose of the Network is to improve agency capabilities and resources that help vulnerable populations enter the job market, sustain employment, and advance in their careers. The 90 member organizations range from the Workforce Investment Board to Goodwill Industries, Continuum of Care partners, and other smaller organizations that have population-specific workforce services that include prisoner re-entry, veteran's services, substance abuse, and domestic violence populations.

The Nashville Workforce Network maintains the strength and expertise within its membership to address the barriers to employment that the How's Nashville program has identified in its service population. However, the Workforce Network and How's Nashville have not yet forged formal ties. Following the summit it is our goal to engage with the community in uniting leaders of these respective local initiatives and learn from federal partners and leaders of programs in peer communities. In addition, we wish to develop a joint, local initiative that serves jobseekers experiencing homelessness that have high barriers to employment.

COLLABORATION

Both programs are partnerships between area nonprofits, public, and private sector stakeholders and divisions of Metropolitan Nashville Government. The two organizations are mutually supportive with a dedicated position for the Executive Director of the Workforce Investment Board on the Homelessness Commission and How's Nashville partner organizations as active members of the Workforce Network.

The Nashville Workforce Network is a volunteer-driven collaborative organization that relies on the expertise and time of member organizations. How's Nashville uses a collective impact approach to help partner organizations set goals collectively and coordinate housing access through a mutually reinforcing plan of action. Each organization uses their strength and expertise to reach the goal of increased housing placement and stability.



For example, Nashville partners contribute the following:

- The VA and local PHA (MDHA) provide housing subsidies through VASH and Section 8 programs
- Nonprofit homeless service organizations identify the most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness using a common assessment tool and assist with the collection and submission of required paperwork and identification documents.
- Mental health organizations, the VA, and nonprofit organizations provide support services in the home once housing is obtained.
- The Metropolitan Homelessness Commission provides “backbone” support to the effort by using staff time via local dollars to guide the vision and strategy.

Funding sources for all of these activities are truly mixed. Most outreach and housing navigation is funded by federal PATH funds and private funds that are raised by individuals and local foundations. HUD issues housing subsidies and support service funding is a mix of Medicaid dollars and local funds from the county and private foundations. Once individuals have obtained permanent housing, move-in costs are covered by private dollars raised from the community as well as federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

Both the Nashville Workforce Network and How’s Nashville have partners who are part of the Continuum of Care.



INNOVATION

Both the Nashville Workforce Network and How's Nashville represent collaborative approaches to issues that had previously not been tackled collectively. The How's Nashville campaign recruited traditional homeless service providers, various organizations who provided subsidized housing and housing vouchers, and public and private sector apartment management companies. The focus of the initial work was to streamline the application and waiting list processes, recruit housing providers who were not traditional players in the world of homeless services, and to combine the two approaches into a more efficient way to move people off the streets into permanent housing.

Simultaneously, the campaign coordinated case management resources that were already available through mental health services, Veteran's Affairs, and other similar population-specific providers. The combination of permanent housing and case management has led to an 80% retention rate after a year. Further details are available at www.howsnashville.org.

The Nashville Workforce Network grew out of the Mayor's 2010 Poverty Initiative. Its focus as a Network is not on direct service, but rather on collective impact and capacity building. In collaboration, the Network has focused on professional development for members, many of whom are the only staff person focused on workforce development within a larger, more population-focused organization. The Network has identified effective practice in workforce development from around the country and facilitated trainings and opportunities for implementation and shared learning.

Network-wide communication allows for job fairs, employment-readiness workshops, and other opportunities that organizations provide their clients to be opened up to the collective client base, expanding the impact of a single organization and expanding meaningful opportunities for job-seekers in the community. The Network includes 90 organizations, over 150 individual members, and a collective reach of over 23,000 people in the Middle Tennessee area. More information is available at www.nashvilleworkforcenetwork.org.



FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

How's Nashville currently leverages local funds with HUD and Veterans Affairs funding as well as charitable contributions for the housing. Case management is supported by the VA, Medicaid, local government, federal government, and private funds. Local dollars provide \$405,000 in gap-filling case management for those participants not eligible for the other supports. Federal CABHI (through SAMHSA/HHS) will provide \$1.5 million in support services for veterans and people experiencing chronic homelessness over the next three years. In addition, Nashville's PHA and VA prioritize approximately 600 HUD-VASH vouchers and up to 216 Section 8 housing vouchers. A flexible fund of approximately \$100,000, which is raised by the local community, pays for move-in costs such as security deposits, application fees, debts to PHA's and utility companies, and utility deposits.

Furthermore, up to \$200,000 in federal CDBG funds also pay for eligible move-in costs. Currently, the program does not utilize WIA funds.

Many Nashville Workforce Network members serve homeless job seekers through a variety of funding sources that include WIA, VA, and privately raised resources. The Network utilizes Local Workforce Investment Board staff for administrative support. The Network has also been the recipient of a Bank of America grant for a small pilot project that implemented a collaborative approach to job fairs in an effort to expand the opportunities for participants without doubling the workload of the workforce staff members in small organizations. However, the Network is wary of applying for grant funds that might otherwise have gone to member organizations to expand or support direct service. All other Network activities are supported through agency volunteers.

Currently, neither the How's Nashville program nor the Nashville Workforce Network have initiative-funded programs specifically targeting homeless job seekers.



CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

Within the Nashville Workforce Network, employers are engaged both as members of the organization itself and as key informants and resources for member organizations. The Network provides quarterly opportunities for service providers to engage in sector-specific conversations with hiring managers regarding their targeted new hires, necessary skill sets, hiring practices, and core industry values. Network members are then able to translate that direct access to employer expertise into meaningful program adjustments and skill building for clients. Sectors that are engaged include Hospitality, Commercial Construction, and Public Works.

DATA and RESULTS

Nashville's HMIS captures all project specific data required for applicable federal funding sources via Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as well as for its federal partners, Veterans Administration (VA) and U.S. Department of Health of Human Services (HHS). Client level data is stored within our local HMIS that records client universal data (i.e. demographic data), performance data (housing stability, income measurement and mainstream benefit access) as well as the history of data collected on clients.

This includes earned income data for clients who maintained, increased, or gained income while in a given CoC funded project during the designated operating year. It also tracks loss of income or no access to income.

How's Nashville partners use a common assessment tool called the VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool) and a Match Initiation Form that collects data to determine the most appropriate housing intervention as well as the future tenant's preferences that help match the person to vacant housing. Data from these two tools clarify the demand for housing and employment as well as the challenges.



The following is self-reported data from 2014:

- 117 (31%) of the 373 households reported \$0 income per month. Of the 117, 96% are receiving food stamps, 39 reported a felony conviction (10 of 39 were violent felonies, 4 reported being registered sex offenders, and 15 are on probation or parole.
- 256 (69%) reported income. Of those that reported income, average monthly income is \$515, almost half (130) receive disability benefits from SSA, 13 reported selling *The Contributor* (a local homeless newspaper), 76 reported temporary or full-time work, 5 reported only child support, 2 reported VA benefits, 108 report having a felony conviction (43 of 108 were violent felonies), 11 are registered sex offenders, and 32 are on probation or parole.

Between July 2013 and June 2014, approximately 1,196 persons were served within our HUD continuum, 842 of whom were adults. (*This excludes two Domestic Violence transitional housing programs.*) Of the 842,486 “stayers” (those remaining in any of the reported programs by the end of the operating year) were specifically measured in the employment Income category. 138 or 28% of the “stayer” adults either maintained or increased their income during the operating term. More specifically, 95 or 19% of the adult “stayers” increased their earned income or gained it entirely. From the 842 adults, 320 exited one of the CoC funded projects. Of the 320 “leavers,” 215 or 67% either maintained or increased their source of employment income. Of the 215 adult “leavers,” 173 or 54% increased employment income or gained it entirely.



It is important to note that Permanent Supportive Housing programs represent a sizeable portion of the programs evaluated in our Annual Performance Report. The population served within these programs is more apt to gain access to other forms of income, such as SSI or SSDI. In looking at how many sources of overall income were calculated at the end of the operating year, 235 adult “leavers” had access to more than one source of income, including one recurring earned income source. For adult “stayers,” 456 adult “stayers” had access to more than one source of income, of which 171 had access to more than just one recurring earned income source.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION

How’s Nashville and the Nashville Workforce Network are highly replicable approaches to as examples of collective impact and collaboration. Both organizations provide examples of the potential impact of multiple organizations working together towards a common agenda. As such, they require little infusions of new cash or program infrastructure to create and sustain systemic change.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Phoenix, AZ

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community Population	3.9 million (Maricopa County)
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	5,918 (Maricopa County)
2013 CoC award	\$26,653,450 (Maricopa County)
2013 WIA formula grant allocation	\$10,344,401 (Phoenix); \$13,357,733 (Maricopa County) = Regional Total \$23,702,134
Current unemployment rate	6.4 % (June 2014)

DESCRIPTION

The Phoenix Continuum of Care (CoC) has implemented the first phase of our regional Coordinated Intake and Assessment System as required by HUD. People experiencing homelessness are identified through various outreach efforts in the community and referred to the access points either for singles or families. Individuals generally access emergency shelter first and then are assessed for the appropriate housing interventions. The community also has street outreach teams and monthly Project Connect events that identify individuals and families experiencing homelessness. A common assessment tool, the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) Vulnerability Index (VI) SPDAT and Family VI-SPDAT is used to assess the needs of the individual or family and match them to the most appropriate intervention, including diversion. Once in shelter and housing programs, the provider's case management plan focuses on employment to meet the HEARTH Act goals. This plan may include workforce-training programs, assistance with resume development, childcare to enable parents to interview, as well as skill development and linkage to employment opportunities. Formerly chronically homeless individuals who are identified in permanent supportive housing can address employment needs at an individualized pace through the Housing First model of case management.



Through various regional collaborations among workforce development program partners and community and faith-based organizations, there is the opportunity to strengthen outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness in order to enhance employment opportunities while maximizing continuum of care services. The preferred employment approach is a hybrid model of currently used practices job readiness workshops, developing stronger employer relationships through Sector Strategies to understand their workforce needs, utilizing the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST) model to increase training and education attainments and developing on-job- training agreements (OJT) as strategy for work experience and entrance for gainful employment.

COLLABORATION

The leadership team that represents our community includes the following organizations.

1. City of Phoenix – Community and Economic Development Department: this Department provides resources and services to identify, assess and develop the talent pipeline to needs of employers and brings the systems resources for local workforce development programs.
2. Arizona Department of Economic Security – the State Workforce Agency - provides oversight of the State Workforce Labor Exchange system, Arizona Job Connection, and supports employment initiatives in the community.
3. Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Employment and Rehabilitative Services – they provide state administration of public workforce development programs.
4. Maricopa Association of Governments is the lead agency for the Regional Continuum of Care to End Homelessness.



5. UMOM New Day Centers (UMOM) is a Continuum of Care funded provider of shelter and housing for individuals and families and is the coordinated intake and assessment center pilot for the region's Family Homeless Hub, with in-depth community knowledge of the most vulnerable population and employment programs.
6. Valley of the Sun United Way is a member of the Continuum of Care Board, community partner in Dedicating Opportunities to End Homelessness Initiative with HUD, and lead convener of the permanent supportive housing initiative for the chronically homeless in Maricopa County.

Through this opportunity the Greater Metro Phoenix region is poised to connect existing workforce development collaborations (Maricopa Human Capital Collaboration, Phoenix Workforce Connection (PWC)/ Maricopa Workforce Connections (MWC) Access Points) to Continuum of Care agencies serving individuals and families experiencing lack of permanent housing. The city of Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Board has formal agreements with over 25 community and faith based organizations convening around workforce development to foster, increase and access a pipeline of skilled, trained, and qualified available workforce to meet the needs of business and industry.

The existing workforce development partners will continue to link services and resources to Continuum of Care agencies serving those in shelters and permanent supportive housing programs. Meanwhile, collaboration partners will contribute their expertise, leverage staff and proven and effective practices, and share resources in order to help individuals obtain training and employment to provide resources to end homelessness and remain in permanent housing.

As the realigned collaboration of partners around homelessness and employment moves forward, existing resources and funding will be utilized until other funding strategies can be researched, discussed and fully vetted among the partners and stakeholders.



INNOVATION

At this juncture, there is an opportunity to connect workforce development programs and organizations to the CoC to create a focused and strategic approach to maximize shared goals and outcomes of the respective programs. Completing this application process has revealed a gap in knowledge regarding programs and service delivery models. In particular, workforce programs do not necessarily have the information and knowledge about the CoC and its work, while the CoC and homeless sector feels disconnected to the workforce programs. Although what has been revealed and discussed may not register as precisely innovative, there is clearly an opportunity for programs to think strategically and create a road map for collaboration and increase impact to the region.

Given this assignment, the city has begun to have cross-department meetings between workforce development and human services. Our community has not had strong intersections between the workforce system and the shelter and housing system. We are looking to build a strong connective collaboration with the goal of identifying highly vulnerable populations with limited education and connecting them with employment, particularly by identifying industries that are more forgiving and understanding in working with harder to serve populations. We will set goals, create metrics, and develop a measurement system with a clearly defined target population.

FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding for adults, dislocated workers and youth are accessible by the individuals regardless of their sub-population category. City of Phoenix Workforce Connection (PWC) staff and service providers complete screening and assessment to determine the interest and needs of individuals accessing services. Our community service provider's parent organizations offer a myriad of services beyond workforce development that are leveraged to better serve individuals accessing WIA resources.



The WIA funding allocations for the city of Phoenix Workforce Connection cover all aspects of operations for the workforce development program, including subcontracting out a portion of funds for service delivery to community based organizations. PY 2014 allocations by funding streams were:

Adult	\$3,233,526
Youth	\$3,396,638
Dislocated Worker	\$3,291,221
Rapid Response	\$ 364,566
Total	\$10,285,951

Community partners will continue to leverage funding and resources from partnering organizations and will seek competitive funding opportunities to build on evidence-based practices to meet stated goals and objectives of the collaboration.

CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

City of Phoenix: Within the city of Phoenix the workforce development program is part of Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD). The relationships developed through CEDD divisions and staff help identify hiring trends, training/workforce skills needed by private, public, and nonprofit sector employers. These relationships allow city of Phoenix and regional workforce programs/partners access to connect pipelines of skilled and qualified candidates to employers in the valley.

The Phoenix Business and Workforce Development Center (PBWDC), which opened in May 2013, is designed to enhance Phoenix's competitive position; assist with expansion, retention and recruitment of new and existing businesses and industries and; focus on expanding high quality opportunities for Phoenix residents. The center served 4,815 visitors with hiring events, meetings, trainings and industry forums by business leaders in all industries, elected officials, job seekers, staff, and economic and workforce development partners.



The Business Solutions Team assisted with the expansion, retention and recruitment of new and existing businesses and industries. The team posted 2,248 jobs to the Arizona Job Connection (AJC), a job-matching data system. This number represents a portion of all leads generated. Through the PBWDC and its services, 443 employers were served in some capacity this past program year. Customized talent acquisitions are job fairs, hiring events, interviews, candidate screening and employer open houses/info sessions. The Business Solutions Team coordinated and/or conducted 46 activities and events to connect business to qualified candidates.

United Methodist Outreach Ministries (UMOM): Difficulties completing education and gaining employment are two of the most significant factors that cause homelessness. For example, on average, 40% of the adult residents at UMOM have not completed high school or an equivalency, and currently only 14% of adult residents are employed. Many have no marketable skills and struggle to obtain employment.

HUD has identified several research-based job preparedness strategies that are most effective for individuals experiencing homelessness and low-income adults. These include conducting job training that provides hands-on, "real world" experiences; job coaching; and assistance with resume preparation, job searches, and support once people become employed. UMOM's Homegrown Program provides all of these.

The Homegrown Program helps residents gain marketable skills to obtain employment in the restaurant, catering, hospitality and other industries. There are 2,264 restaurants, 3,100+ catering services, and hundreds of other hospitality-based businesses in Maricopa County. Thus, there is a tremendous need for trained workers. Due to transportation and childcare challenges, businesses that are in close proximity to UMOM and offer flexible hours to single parents have been identified. The workforce development team works with adult residents to prepare them to interview with a variety of food service employers. SSP and HMSHost manage the food concessions at the airport and call UMOM directly as they add each new food location.



Aramark works closely with UMOM staff, providing volunteers to role-play with residents and provide funding to support the workforce development program. Nibblers, a local catering company, along with many of the food and beverage departments within area hotels, hires residents. They also provide feedback, which is incorporated into the workforce development program.

Utilizing and enhancing the existing relationships and practices of workforce development organizations and continuum of care agencies service models will increase target outcomes to maximize the integration of employment and housing strategies for the Greater Phoenix region.

DATA AND RESULTS

Homeless service providers throughout the CoC in the regional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) collect HUD-required data elements. The CoC collects annual Performance Report data for each HUD funded program and reported in the annual application to HUD. Subsequently, the CoC measures the percent of clients who have employment income at the time they enter the program, during the program, and at the time they exit the program, as well as the change in income during the time in the program. In addition, the CoC measures non-employment income and connection to mainstream resources and housing retention for individuals in permanent supportive housing.

Housing retention demonstrates how long individuals who were formerly chronically homeless stay in permanent housing and are thus not returning to homelessness. Indeed, the lack of income generated from employment or benefits makes it challenging to maintain housing.

As reported in the 2013/2014 application to HUD: 22% of participants increased their income from employment from program entry to exit; 27% increased their income from sources other than employment; 22% of adults in CoC homeless assistance programs had earned income; 92% of participants in CoC funded homeless assistance programs remained housed after one year.



The 2013/2014 application to HUD can be found at http://www.azmag.gov/Documents/CoC_2014-01-31_FY-2013-Continuum-of-Care-Application.pdf

Data required for WIA is collected in the state's case management system known as Arizona Job Connection. Arizona provides a Statewide Annual Report that provides performance outcomes for the state and local workforce investment areas.

<http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/PY2012/AZWIAAnnualReport2012.pdf>

Currently Arizona Job Connection reports 191 individuals experiencing homelessness are registered or enrolled for workforce development program services.

SUCCESS STORY: PHOENIX

Given the success of UMOM's Homegrown Program, the Leadership Team looks forward to identifying ways to expand similar programming across the County. Here is one success story:

Barista Training Graduate Gains Employment

Melinda is a single mom residing at UMOM New Day Centers. She lost her job and then her apartment as a result of the lost income. She was devastated. She had never been homeless before and didn't know where to turn. After sleeping in their car for a few days, they found safety and support at the Watkins Shelter. They ended up coming to UMOM's Van Buren Campus, where Melinda was able to enroll in UMOM's barista training program while her daughter attended school. In the six week training program, Melinda learned how to make espresso drinks, gained cashiering and customer service skills, and was able to access UMOM's employment center.



Upon graduation, Melinda was hired at a new restaurant and brewery in a trendy downtown location. She is happy to be earning money for her family and working at a growing restaurant. She celebrated her success this September at UMOM's quarterly success celebration, where she and other recent graduates were honored. Melinda and her family are currently working with UMOM's housing specialists to get their very own apartment very soon.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Portland-Multnomah County, OR

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community population	9,211,888, excluding cities of Glendale, Pasadena, and Long Beach (2013 estimates) for Los Angeles County
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	35,524 for the Los Angeles Continuum of Care PIT 2013
2013 Continuum of Care (CoC) Award	\$79,223,521
2014-15 WIA formula grant allocation plus Governor's Discretionary	\$41 million for the City; \$33.9 million for the County
Current unemployment rate	9.1% as of June, 2014

DESCRIPTION

Our community has built a strong tapestry of connections and resources dedicated to supporting families and individuals experiencing homelessness with housing, economic opportunity programming, and related services. The work is led through partnerships with Worksystems Inc. (Workforce Investment Board), the City of Portland (Continuum of Care lead), Multnomah County (Community Action Agency), numerous non-profit organizations, Home Forward (public housing authority), and public workforce partners.



Our work is built on the assumption of three core components, which are essential for long-term stability and success for people experiencing homelessness:

1. **Housing:** People must be stably housed to reach employment, training, and career goals.
2. **Relationships of Support:** Individualized, relationship-based, culturally-relevant and long-term support from a dedicated Employment Specialist is critical to assisting participants in overcoming challenges in navigating and accessing resources and opportunities.
3. **Participant-directed planning:** Individuals know best what they want and need, making self-driven planning more effective than traditional workforce programs.

Portland's **Aligned Partner Network (APN)** is a collaboration of public and non-profit agencies that intentionally integrate housing, relationship-based case management and participant-directed career plans towards a shared goal of helping participants move towards quality, living-wage employment. The workforce system sets aside training and employment resources, which are available exclusively to the clients of Aligned Partner organizations. Those partner organizations offer client-centered vocational case management and access to housing or rent assistance, which is often funded through a contract with the housing authority or via the Continuum of Care.

The APN model has worked with a variety of target populations – including families with children, chronically homeless individuals with multiple barriers, survivors of domestic violence, people living with HIV/AIDS, people with Limited English Proficiency, and people with criminal backgrounds. The foundation of the APN model is the leveraging of each system or agency's expertise, in strategic connection with the workforce system, to coordinate long-term support for people as they gain stability and develop plans for employment and career advancement.



COLLABORATION

In 2008, an integration of the public workforce system with the Oregon Employment Department resulted in a dramatic increase in workforce registrants (from 2,444 in 2007 to 47,852 in 2008) and immediately created a service environment that de-emphasized individualized support and promoted universal access. The State stopped funding case management with WIA funds, in favor of increasing the range and quantity of services available to job seekers.

While this change expanded services to a greater number of job seekers, the new structure was not as responsive to those in need of support in navigating the workforce system and achieving successful outcomes. This was the impetus for the design of the APN model. The means to move the new model forward appeared shortly thereafter, when the workforce system, the Continuum of Care, and Multnomah County each received an influx of new funds under ARRA in 2009 with the goal of stabilizing families and helping them get back to work.

Under the APN model, each system or service provider focuses on their area of expertise while working collaboratively to provide wrap-around services for families:

- **Worksystems, Inc.**, the Workforce Investment Board, provides training, employment and career services that are available to the clients of partners, gives partner agencies access to the workforce database so they can track clients' progress, and provides training and on-going support for case managers. Services are delivered via WorkSource Portland Metro, which includes the Employment Department and Community Colleges.



- **Various non-profit organizations** with expertise in working with people experiencing homelessness provide culturally specific services, including relationships of support and vocational case management, housing placement and retention support, behavioral and primary health care, and a variety of other support services. This work is often funded under a contract with City or County government to provide homeless services.
- **Home Forward** (the housing authority) provides access to flexible rent assistance via the Moving to Work program, as well as providing project based Section 8 vouchers and administering a countywide short term rent assistance program.

The APN currently consists of more than 22 agencies. Some of the highly effective collaborations, each serving a unique population, include:

- ***Action for Prosperity:*** This initiative was the original aligned partnership that emerged out of the ARRA funding in 2009. It targets a wide range of families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Through Multnomah County's system of eight community-based and culturally specific providers, the program uses an "assertive engagement" case management approach to support families as they access training, job search activities, and ultimately employment. Home Forward funds rental assistance via contracts with each of the eight partner agencies.
- ***Economic Opportunity Program (EOP):*** Originally a City-funded program that functioned independently of the Workforce system, the EOP focuses on increasing the incomes of very low-income households. Several years ago, the program aligned with Worksystems, and this co-investment has expanded its reach by leveraging the relationship-based case management, housing, and supports at five agencies with training and employment resources in the workforce system. Seven programs in the initiative are experts in serving people experiencing homelessness, including two that offer vocational training in construction and healthcare.



The initiative's target populations include youth and adults experiencing homelessness, culturally specific communities, individuals with Limited English Proficiency and individuals with criminal backgrounds. People can participate in the program for up to three years.

- **Working Choices:** This program is managed by Cascade AIDS Project, which provides employment support for people living with HIV/AIDS who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Staff provide intensive case management, housing support, assistance connecting to medical supports, and career coaching.
- **Employment Access Center:** The Employment Access Center (EAC), operated by Central City Concern, is a particularly unique Aligned Partner, using an Individual Placement model of Supported Employment. This nationally recognized evidence based practice combines supported housing case management and Employment Specialists with staffing ratios of roughly 1:30. The EAC modified the model to effectively support individuals exiting homelessness and in recovery from primary addictions and mental health disorders and criminal histories and is recognized as one of the top performing programs of its kind in the country. The EAC's model focuses on helping clients find jobs immediately in order to help them stabilize and experience success. Employment Specialists help clients secure competitive jobs and then provide ongoing support for up to three years to help clients keep or advance in their jobs, utilizing the workforce system as appropriate.

These collaborations under the APN are predicated on shared investment of resources by all of the systems serving homeless people in our community.



In 2012, our Continuum of Care adopted [A Home for Everyone](#), a revised plan to end homelessness which provides renewed synergy for systems alignment and stronger connections to employment for people experiencing homelessness. Access to income and greater economic opportunity is one of six key program areas that will be prioritized in our planning and programming in the years ahead. Leaders from Worksystems, local businesses, public safety, foundations, consumers and community based organizations and other stakeholders hold positions on our governance body, and will help to ensure the development of new opportunities.

INNOVATION

Prior to APN, the rigid structure of the workforce system was not easily accessible for the homeless, who often fell out of the system or were blocked from accessing resources due to the challenges of navigating a system that relies upon self-advocacy and computer skills. The APN model, which recognizes the need for intensive, relationship-based supports, was developed over time through a series of pilot projects funded by a combination of private foundation and flexible government resources that encouraged experimentation.

Two cornerstones of the APN model are the *Employment Specialist/Career Coach* and “*Liaison*” positions. Career Coaches, who work with small caseloads of no more than 1:40, use Career Mapping to help clients develop self-driven plans. Career Mapping has been shown by DOL to increase access to workforce services for populations with multiple barriers.¹ The Liaisons, co-funded by the workforce system and the Aligned Partners, provide training in vocational case management and the workforce system and provide any technical assistance case managers need to support their clients in accessing training and employment resources.

¹ Promising Practices: Supporting Job Seekers with Multiple Challenges to Employment, October 2009. National Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Program Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration



Central City Concern's supportive employment model has been recognized as one of the top seven ending homeless employment programs in the country by the Butler Family Funded ICA Group 2012 publication titled ["Employment Outcomes and Performance Benchmarks for Programs serving Homeless Job Seekers"](#).

Additionally, in FY 2008-09, those securing supported employment services through this program achieved a rate of alcohol and drug treatment completion at 72%, suggesting that employment programming may positively impact the rate of treatment completion significantly. Treatment completion for this population typically hovers around 40% both nationally and locally.

FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

Last year, APN was funded by the below sources and amounts:

Entity Providing Funds	Source of Funds
Worksystems, Inc.	WIA, Wagner Peyser, Workforce Innovation Fund and other DOL competitive grants, City of Portland General Funds and CBDG
City of Portland	General Fund, Continuum of Care, CDBG, HOPWA, HOME
Home Forward	Moving to Work
Multnomah County	General Fund, HUD Family Futures, CSBG
Central City Concern (EAC)	SAMHSA Block Grant, Voc. Rehab, USDA FSET 50/50, VA, private donors, foundations, and more.

APN leverages employment and training resources through the public workforce system, which is funded in part by WIA formula funds. Approximately 30% of training funds available through the public workforce system are set aside to serve high-barrier populations. WIA formula funds are also used to purchase or develop new services for delivery through the public system that meet the unique needs of this population.



CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

The workforce system engages a large network of employers to provide unsubsidized employment, work experiences and On-the-Job Training opportunities. The strongest ties are with employers in targeted, high demand sectors: healthcare, manufacturing, construction and IT.

The EAC program builds diverse employer relationships across the metro area, requiring Employment Specialists to have six face-to-face employer contacts each week and 60% of their time is in the community with clients and meeting prospective employers. As a result, clients of the EAC have secured jobs in more than 15 sectors and over 50 zip codes in the Portland area.

DATA AND RESULTS

Worksystems operates and collects data on a statewide information system linked to the State's Unemployment Insurance wage record information that tracks service and performance information. Many of the APN partners track their program data in the local HMIS system, but also access Worksystems' database. Combined, these initiatives track: basic demographic information, participation in case management and WorkSource activities (including training), benefits, employment and income data, rental assistance and housing stability, treatment outcomes, soft skills development, and financial management skills. At a minimum, data is collected at entry, exit, and over a 12-month follow-up period, though many partners collect data more frequently during program participation. Programs have achieved significant results:

- EAC: Serves between 400-550 annually; 71-77% secure employment; average wage - \$10.43
- EOP: Serves over 500 annually; 97% occupational training completion; 69% employed at exit; average wage - \$13
- AFP: Serves 200 annually; 52-60% employed at exit; average wage - \$11.74; 81% stably housed at follow-up



SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION

The APN model demonstrates the effectiveness of aligning employment, case management and housing resources to help homeless people stabilize and move towards employment. These local programs are effective. However, there are significant barriers to replication:

1. **Housing** is critical to success. Portland addresses this by aligning our limited housing resources with employment programs. However, there is not enough housing to scale this model, and the majority of the EOP programs do not have this resource. Artificial 24-month time limits on transitional housing create pressure to move people into the first available job, rather than allowing them time to access training and prepare for career track employment.
2. People with multiple barriers need an **ongoing relationship of support** to help them access stable employment, yet none of the federal systems fund case management with a low enough ratio to provide the level of support needed. Additionally, no system funds retention and advancement work, so people who do secure jobs are quickly exited and left on their own as they face the challenges that inevitably arise for people with limited work experience and limited systems of support. Portland addresses this using a combination of local and private funding to bring caseload sizes down.
3. **Participant-driven plans** are effective because they trust people to be experts in their own lives. Too often, employment programs are driven by federal measures focused on process (certification, participation, etc.) instead of outcome goals of career track or living wage employment. On top of that, measures are misaligned across federal entities. Replication and scaling will depend on DOL, HHS and HUD working together to set reasonable, outcome-focused measures for the TANF program, for HUD FSS, and for WIA.



The evolution and expansion of the APN model demonstrates its adaptability and resiliency in effectively serving populations experiencing homelessness. In the months and years ahead, we look forward to sharing our learning from the APN model and strengthening our efforts through the expertise and knowledge of other local and national sources.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Richmond, VA

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community Population	1.2 million
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	846
2013 CoC award	\$4.2 million
2013 WIA formula grant allocation	\$4,644,454
Current unemployment rate	6.7%

DESCRIPTION

The Greater Richmond Continuum of Care works in 8 localities with over 35 nonprofit and public sector partners to understand and address the needs of people experiencing homelessness. Over the course of a year, more than 3,000 individuals experience homelessness; the majority of these individuals are served through an emergency shelter program and connected to community-based resources.

Our community starts with data from people experiencing homelessness and works collaboratively to identify the community stakeholders needed to overcome the barriers identified by our neighbors. We collect information on employment and income at intake for services and work to connect individuals to employment and training opportunities at multiple points in our continuum of services and through community-based partnerships.

Several partner agencies work directly with workforce resources to assist households experiencing homelessness in navigating existing resources. CARITAS, our largest emergency shelter has an employment and life skills program targeted to men overcoming addiction and homelessness. St. Joseph's Villa, our largest rapid re-housing provider, has incorporated employment services into their nationally certified rapid re-housing provider. Virginia Supportive Housing, our largest permanent supportive housing provider, has developed some supportive employment models to better serve their clients.



Other nonprofit partners have created programs to address the needs of other subpopulations. We have begun to work with our DOL-funded workforce system to develop protocols that facilitate cross-system referrals for all subpopulations experiencing homelessness.

COLLABORATION

The Greater Richmond Continuum of Care is made up of more than 35 nonprofit and public sector partners. The collaboration between the workforce and homeless services systems has grown organically and primarily through interagency staff collaborations working to meet the needs of individual clients. An informal task force initiated by a small family foundation in the region has been meeting to understand the issues facing people experiencing homelessness as they work to increase their employment and economic security. The Vice Chair of our regional Continuum of Care board serves on the board of Resource, our WIA agency.

The Resource Partnership Team collectively develops a seamless system that provides business services, employment, and training opportunities to the unemployed and underemployed. We aim to create a network of services that will streamline processes and facilitate sustainable employment that enhances the economic development of the region by developing career pathways to success for individuals and talent pipelines for our business community. The Partnership Team includes a number of homeless service providers as well as workforce development agencies; the Team is focused around task force groups that develop and implement projects related to the improvement of our workforce system. These task forces are designed to provide practical solutions to challenges.



Currently, we have created a task force around these five areas:

1. Partnership Events
2. Service Integration/Process Improvement
3. Communication/Outreach
4. Servicing Clients with Barriers to Employment (e.g. Criminal backgrounds, mature workers, etc.)
5. Digital Divide (Issues around access to and the ability to use technology in both careers and job search)

As a result of this summit, we will integrate the ad hoc homeless services task force into the partnership task force structure. While we have begun to partner and have a strong intent to collaborate even more fully, we are still working to determine how our systems can work hand-in-hand to help individuals experiencing homelessness transition from crisis stabilization resources to employment and training.

INNOVATION

Our region has focused primarily on developing programs that address the needs of specific subpopulations creatively. Two examples of this include a five-week skills-based course for men exiting homelessness through a peer-based substance abuse recovery program and a rapid re-housing program for families with children which pairs clients up with an employment specialist as soon as intake for housing resources is completed. Our biggest innovation has been to work to translate the workforce and homeless services systems and to identify potential areas for partnership. We are working closely with Resource, our WIA program to overcome the “ability to benefit” principle of workforce programs so that housing status is not a significant barrier to accessing employment and workforce training.



FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

To date, funding for our collaborative projects have come from private funders who are interested in increasing access to mainstream workforce systems for people experiencing homelessness. We anticipate that the implementation of the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will enable Resource to better coordinate services and integrate funding and to offer more intensive educational and training services.

CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

Employers are engaged through outreach and education from Resource and as volunteers and supporters of homeless service providers in the Continuum of Care. Homeward works with Snagajob, an online resource for employers that are hiring hourly workers, in order to develop and implement an employment resource at our Project Homeless Connect event.

CARITAS Works engages employers as volunteers to conduct mock interviews for their five-week employment and life skills programs. Many of these volunteers have committed to hiring graduates of the program.

DATA AND RESULTS

We have not yet begun to cross-reference data from the workforce and homeless services systems, but each system currently collects data on people experiencing homelessness. Resource reports that 4% of the clients served in the last fiscal year identified as homeless.

The Continuum of Care uses HMIS and biannual point-in-time counts to monitor the needs, unmet needs, and trends of people experiencing homelessness. Resource collects data using the HUD definition of homelessness as well. In our January 2014 Point In Time (PIT) count of people experiencing homelessness, 19.6% of the adults surveyed indicated that they are employed. Of those who are employed, 37.4% work full-time, 40.2% work part-time, and 22.4% do day labor or temporary work.



SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION

One suggestion for replication is to incorporate employment assistance and connections to mainstream workforce services into rapid re-housing programs. This kind of partnership will allow homeless service providers to serve more households who fall into homelessness primarily because of job loss and other economic crises. As continuums of care work to reduce lengths of homelessness experienced by households, waiting for a household to stabilize in employment is not always practical. Helping a household to obtain stable housing through a rapid re-housing program while connecting them to workforce resources makes sense.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Salt Lake County, UT

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community Population	1,079,721
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	9,566
2013 CoC award	\$6,377,242
2013 WIA formula grant allocation	\$12,560,012 (PY 2013/FFY 2014; includes Adult, Dislocated, and Youth)
Current unemployment rate	3.6%

DESCRIPTION

Salt Lake County addresses homelessness through a cross-sector collaborative composed of state and local government agencies working in partnership with the nonprofit sector. Using federal, state, and local funding, the partnership integrates employment and training into emergency shelter and housing options designed to meet the needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

The Department of Workforce Services (DWS) has allocated full time staff to be stationed at shelters throughout the Salt Lake Valley. We have 16 full time staff stationed in the community who are located onsite at various local shelters and permanent supportive housing sites. It is often difficult for customers to understand and navigate application pathways and to be aware of all the services and programs that help them get housed and employed. Stationing staff in the community helps with this barrier. Of the 16 staff, 14 of them are employment counselors who focus on job searching and employment strategies in a one-on-one environment with each customer.



DWS offers several programs to customers that help them toward their goal of employment. Customers can apply for Food Stamps, Financial Assistance, Medicaid, Child Care, Training funds, and can receive assistance on how to find, obtain, and maintain a job. These programs help individuals as they focus on their own path back into the workforce.

A customer who applies for any of the public assistance benefits gets individualized employment plans which target a specific occupation goal based on an assessment, with associated services, tasks, and referrals to services which help achieve their employment goal. This team of workers reaches out to those who may not qualify or be interested in any of our public assistance programs and are able to still provide employment counseling, assessments, job coaching, and job search assistance to the homeless population regardless if they are attached to a specific program.

Common barriers are identified through assessments given to customers so all staff can focus on how to help customers overcome these constraints. Resources from DWS and partnering agencies can then be better coordinated and provided to customers. These include services such as transportation, physical and mental health, computer literacy, and others. Employment strategies are also identified based on common needs and occupations, along with patterns of personal constraints.

Most of the homeless population looks for jobs in similar industries. This enables employment counselors to target specific employers, identify how best to apply, and discover what the employer is looking for so customers are prepared for applications. Beyond individual counseling, workshops and a Job Club specifically for customers at the various housing and shelter sites in the community are offered. These help address constraints that this target population faces and reveal how these barriers disrupt their career pathway. Employment strategies for customers focus on supportive employment opportunities where the employer is either subsidized to hire the customer or training and coaching on the job is offered. Non-supportive employment focuses on targeting industries and occupations.



The target population includes both those who are chronically homeless living in a supportive housing site and those individuals who are residing in emergency shelter. Some of those in shelter who are identified as chronically homeless transition into permanent supportive housing sites while the Rapid Rehousing program transitions the rest of the target population into more stable housing.

COLLABORATION

This collaborative effort began when Utah created a 10 year plan to end chronic homelessness. This is the statewide committee that is chaired by the Lieutenant Governor; each major state agency plays a vital role in this committee. Each agency allocates funds to help in this effort. In an effort to better coordinate and align goals of housing and employment, Utah's Department of Housing and Community Development joined the Department of Workforce Services. This has made it easier to collaborate and communicate in all efforts geared towards helping those facing homelessness. DWS also partners with local nonprofit shelters, Salt Lake County and City government – Housing Divisions, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the local offices for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and local nonprofit and governmental health clinics. There is both a statewide and local countywide committee organized by service providers that get together and coordinate services and funding in order to determine how best to serve the homeless populations.

The Salt Lake County Continuum of Care (SLCoC) also promotes a community-coordinated response to ending homelessness. SLCoC oversees outreach, shelter, housing, and prevention activities. The goal is to quickly end homelessness by helping homeless individuals and families access and maintain housing through mainstream resources and employment. SLCoC has leveraged ESG and TANF with CoC funding to provide Rapid Re-Housing and has focused the majority of CoC funding to provide permanent housing. The majority of this funding is tenant-based rental assistance.



Another local collaborative group called the Partner Administration Team (PAT) is made up of members from DWS, Housing and Community Development (DWS), Salt Lake County Housing, The Road Home, and Advantage Services (employer). This committee focuses on how to engage our customers residing in supportive housing sites with activities that will lead to employment. These meetings are ongoing and continue to provide a focus on what kinds of supportive employment opportunities we can engage customers in, what is working, what is not, and includes a reporting of how many residents are employed.

INNOVATION

The major goal of Utah's 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness was to focus on using the Housing First model in providing housing for chronically homeless individuals. Utah was successful in that effort in constructing more than 500 units of housing in the last several years in addition to the use of dozens of scattered site housing in the community. Having stabilized formerly homeless with housing, it became apparent that there was more that needed to be done both by those who administer the programs and by the formerly homeless. The obvious next step was to provide them with employment opportunities that would further integrate them back into the community as well as provide them increased self-sufficiency.

This new model of addressing housing and employment created more opportunities for collaboration. New housing sites have partners such as the Department of Workforce Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, employers, and others that work hand in hand to provide solutions and keep people housed while working on employment strategies. The University of Utah conducted an analysis of Salt Lake County's efforts and published their results here:

<http://www.socwk.utah.edu/sri/pdf/FinalReportPalmerCourtwithmodel.pdf>



FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

There are multiple funding streams used to help with the efforts of employing the homeless population. Utah has used the Butler Funds, TANF FEP, TANF Rapid Rehousing program, State Discretionary funds, Vocational Rehabilitation, Salt Lake County funding, banking industry companies for donations and re-investment monies, and the Pamela Atkinson Homeless Trust Fund, which are donations from the private industry and community administered by a state agency.

As is often the case with federal funding (WIA), the regulations accompanying those funds tend to be generic in nature, limiting liability of the funding source and are targeted toward mainstream populations. Formerly chronically homeless individuals are considered separate from the mainstream homeless population because they have spent years of their lives on the street and usually face challenges that include mental health problems, substance abuse, criminal histories, and isolation. Providing employment opportunities is challenging and needs to occur along a continuum of employment services. The basic notion of employment may need to be taught once again. The typical type of employment (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) is not something that formerly chronically homeless can easily adapt to. In a lot of cases, employment is customized for each individual client. Again, federal regulations often don't allow for that flexibility. Therefore, other funding sources have been used.

CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

DWS is reaching out to employers related to the most common occupations and industries that our homeless population has for their employment goal. Staff who are assigned as liaisons to our employer community and develop relationships with employers help target employers with job openings that are willing and interested in recruiting directly from our homeless population.



This is typically done for customers involved in the Rapid Rehousing program, which quickly houses and employs customers who may already have the skills and experience to get back into the workforce sooner without retraining.

DWS also partners with several employers who offer supportive employment and have some other form of subsidy to transition customers back into the workforce. Some of these companies and organizations are part of the regular and ongoing coordination meetings and are even located onsite at the DWS employment centers and housing sites in an effort to better partner and refer customers.

From Utah's experience, the employers most effective in employing the homeless are those that offer work that is flexible in the hours of work needed, offer temporary work, allow various people to provide the service over time, provide consistency in the type of the work requested, and show willingness to work with an intermediary agency. These agencies that will contract with the employer for the service that needs to be performed and subsequently hire those who are formerly homeless to provide the work. This option removes several barriers for the employer by the intermediary organization assuming liability and offering a mentoring or support network for those entering the workforce.

DATA AND RESULTS

The evaluation of the employment project conducted by the University of Utah looked at a variety of data. Examples of data that was gathered and analyzed included: previous employment history and employment during the pilot project, employment trends over the duration of the pilot project, physical and mental health barriers of clients and their engagement with service providers, and clients receiving public benefits at the beginning of the pilot and after the pilot was completed. The focus of the study was to determine if clients had engaged in employment, employment was retained, whether there was participation in work readiness activities, use of public benefits, and to assess clients' knowledge of and attitudes toward onsite employment support resources.



The University of Utah's SRI report:

<http://www.socwk.utah.edu/sri/pdf/FinalReportPalmerCourtwithmodel.pdf>

SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION

Two main concepts that have been vital to our success in Utah include initially placing staff in the community at shelters and supportive housing sites. While working where clients are located, we are more reactive and understanding of their needs as well as able to better coordinate with partner agencies and nonprofits to work together.

Additionally, it is very important to understand how to use supportive employment with organizations that take the time for extra training and coaching on the job to help our customers be successful. This helps with retention and continues to give customers feedback and opportunities to learn and grow.

It was most beneficial to the success of the pilot program to develop and put in place an overall steering committee composed of a variety of organizations that brought to the table an interest and resources to make the project move forward. Concurrently, there were regular meetings of case managers who discussed on an individual basis the employment needs of their clients and identified gaps in service. This information was then provided to the Steering Committee who could provide resources to meet those needs.

SUCCESS STORY

From homeless to employed in Salt Lake

Martha, who was hired for a part-time janitorial and housekeeping job at a local hospital, previously had an extensive period of homelessness but has resided at Palmer Court with her two sons since mid-2009. She is on Social Security Insurance and has significant mental health issues that require regular monthly medication. However, Martha has continued to defy adversity and was promoted to a lead position within her job in July 2014 with persistent advocacy and support from her Palmer Court case manager



Martha continued working, making progress and managing through ups and downs. She and her family continue to experience and meet difficult challenges. In mid-summer of 2014, Martha began applying for positions with a full-time employer. She had a strong letter of recommendation from Salt Lake City, solid work history and experience with Valley Services. In addition, the onsite Department of Workforce Services staff had interacted with her enough to know that she was ready to be an excellent employee for a new organization. When she applied she was able to produce strong individual recommendations along with a robust reference from Valley Services. Eventually, Martha was offered a full-time job.

It is clear that without the support of management from partner organizations, this opportunity for Martha would not have been made possible.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Seattle-King County, WA

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community population	652,405 (Seattle); 2,044,449 (King County) (U.S. Census 2013 estimate)
2014 Point In Time (overall homeless)	9,294 (King County)
2013 CoC award	\$24,149,352 (Seattle/King County)
2013 WIA formula grant allocation	\$11,518,444 (King County)
Unemployment rate (2013 annual average)	5.2% (King County)

DESCRIPTION

In 2014, Seattle recorded 9,294 people experiencing homelessness: 3,123 people living on the streets without shelter or transitional housing, 2,906 individuals in shelters, and 3,265 individuals in transitional housing. To address the significant number of people requiring sustainable housing, Seattle recognizes the importance of integrating employment strategies and housing assistance programs and has a history of championing employment initiatives for individuals experiencing homelessness.

- In 1988, the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (WDC) began leading a consortium of local service providers as administrator for the Homeless Intervention Project (HIP). Funded by a McKinney-Vento grant, HIP facilitates homeless adults' transition to reliable housing and provides customized employment and job training services to help individuals gain the skills and incomes necessary to become self-sufficient. Today, the HIP strategy is managed by the WDC and implemented by a coalition of partner agencies: the YWCA of Seattle-King-Snohomish Counties (YWCA), FareStart, and Neighborhood House. The WDC provides contract management, monitoring, oversight, and technical assistance.



The service providers offer direct employment services, employment training, case management, housing stabilization services, mental health services, individualized assessments, employment training, job search, and job retention services.

- Seattle's Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, released in 2005, made the coordination of the various systems with which homeless families interface an essential community-wide priority. The plan, created by the Committee to End Homelessness, furthered the development of a network of "one-stop" access points through which people experiencing homelessness receive employment training and placement assistance.
- Since 2004, Building Changes (formerly AIDS Housing of Washington) has administered the Washington Families Fund (WFF), a public-private partnership between funders of community-based housing and support services for homeless families in need. In 2006, Building Changes led a collaborative effort with local government agencies, the Gates Foundation, the WDC, and other stakeholders to increase a collective emphasis of employment as a necessary service for people experiencing homelessness.

COLLABORATION

In 2010, the WDC, with administrative support from Building Changes, created an *Employment Navigator* model tailored to meet the needs of individuals and families who were experiencing homelessness or who had recently been homeless. Based on the WDC's original conception of the Employment Navigator in 2000, this pilot project supported residents in WFF housing units in King County, acting as a bridge between the WDC's WorkSource employment centers and the WorkSource system's capacity to connect its customers to needed housing.

At its core, the Employment Navigator serves as a knowledge resource and relationship broker to staff and employers, while also bridging any gaps along the continuum of services provided to individuals experiencing homelessness. Employment Navigators are dedicated staff who coordinate



direct referrals and services with partner housing programs, establish cross-system partnerships, build the WorkSource system's ability to serve jobseekers experiencing homelessness, and vocationalize housing programs. This cross-system partnership is essential to better serving the needs of homeless jobseekers.

Cumulative data measuring the Employment Navigator project from inception, April 2010 through June 2013, shows a total of 82 individuals enrolled in the pilot—the original goal was 40. Among them, 35 (43%) entered employment earning an average wage of \$10.56 per hour and 29 or (35%) obtained permanent housing. For the pilot, there were no pre-determined performance measures as this was considered a learning grant.

Currently, King County funds three agencies offering employment navigation services in the WorkSource system. The YWCA HIP program employs an Employment Navigator who is based out of the Downtown Seattle WorkSource Affiliate (One-Stop Center), which is funded through Workforce Investment Act funds. The YWCA is an example of how Seattle is integrating homeless employment services with other wraparound supports.

INNOVATION

The WDC convened the *Connecting Homeless Jobseekers* National Advisory Group in 2011 and 2013, which included representatives from seven WIBs and their local counterparts whose focus was the coordination and delivery of services to people experiencing homelessness. Since then, the National Advisory Group has met quarterly via conference calls to continue to share experiences and evaluate best practices.

Through this initiative, we have identified a number of common challenges in our various urban areas, as well as strategies that can be replicated or adapted in other communities. These strategies include the co-location of services, utilizing Employment Navigators, and federal policy change. Group members have focused their efforts on policy change at both the



federal and local levels; out of these discussions came a list of best practices to improve services for jobseekers experiencing homelessness. Those best practices include:

1. **Develop shared regional vision and goals.** Create multiple cross-system partnerships to leverage capabilities of all member organizations.
2. **Support. Don't duplicate.** Stay in your own lane, but create cross-system partnerships that complement one another and improve knowledge sharing of member organizations.
3. **Allow time to create partner systems and shape effective collaborations.** It takes time to build trust and understanding. Create common systems of data, communication, and language to overcome cultural differences.
4. **Emphasize employment in 10 year plan.** Think practically by integrating employment as system level prevention.
5. **Focus on crafting employer relationships,** awareness, and supports. Find and educate employers so that they are willing to work with homeless customers and ex-offenders.
6. **Innovate to improve services and increase access.** Use flexible funding sources, including both private and public, standardize data sources, and focus on outcomes.

The development of this best-practices list improves on earlier approaches to address homelessness by identifying a need for more integrated services. Earlier models often operated in isolation without comprehensively responding to individual needs, making the goal for sustainable self-sufficiency less likely. For example, an individual might have received transitional housing, but a plan for self-sufficiency to include sustainable employment or health issues would not be addressed in conjunction with housing assistance.



Together, the member WIBs noted that early models for providing housing placed too little emphasis on employment. Employment is now accepted as key to sustaining self-sufficiency because it provides an answer for how to develop a sustainable income stream that enables an individual to secure and pay for housing. Every housing assistance program needs a plan for sustainable employment.

FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

The expansion of the model has been funded to date primarily with private funds through Building Changes and DOL Workforce Innovation Fund grant funds, primarily replicated in the Tacoma-Pierce County region. In Seattle, the WDC currently receives a grant from HUD that directly supports the Homeless Intervention Project (HIP). All WDC HIP funds are slated for employment services for individuals experiencing homelessness. In 2014, the WDC McKinney-Vento funds total \$645,000. Part of this funding supports the employment navigator at the YWCA. Other providers have been able to access and leverage a range of services funded by different streams including BFET, WorkFirst, and King County Homeless Employment Services. The King County effort, funded at approximately \$1,090,000 annually, supports a homeless and employment navigator presence in each WorkSource office. WIA funds remain a small portion of the funding available to homeless individuals and do not directly target any homeless initiatives.

CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

The WDC builds a demand-driven workforce system that aligns the skill development of workers with industry demand as the foundation for economic growth and individual prosperity. Through its business services team, talent pipeline research, and cohort models, The WDC cultivates business relationships and identifies industry specific workforce development needs to tailor career pipelines. In 2013, the WDC's Business Services Team organized 87 career events and communicated over 7,500 openings to WorkSource and WIA youth partners.



Within the Employment Navigator programs there has been a focus on connecting families to career pathways using short-term sector training. The employment navigators work with housing staff and workforce providers to prepare and support families as they select and complete training programs and transition into employment.

In many communities, social enterprises are cropping up as a solution to employment and training services for individuals experiencing homelessness. One of the WDC service providers is Fare Start, a social enterprise business that hires and trains individuals who experience homelessness in restaurant work. Social enterprise businesses actually create jobs while simultaneously training and building skills for the individuals they hire.

Fare Start has also developed a reputation of developing quality job candidates ready for employment, which means restaurants often reach out to the enterprise directly for new hires. Through establishing good relationships with employers and developing a reputation for producing job-ready candidates, employers can depend on service providers to help bridge the gap in their hiring needs.

DATA AND RESULTS

The WDC of Seattle-King County participated in a [national study](#) funded by the Butler Family Fund. The report found that employment services for homeless job seekers generally have the following attributes: increased intensity; involve assertive engagement efforts; progress at a more deliberate pace; and involve integration within housing and workforce services—indicating specific needs beyond the needs jobseekers who are not homeless. The report also found that among homeless employment service programs integrated with One-Stop Career Centers, rates of employment 90 days after exit range from 36% to 54%. According to the Butler funded report, this is on average about 13% lower than the general One-Stop population.



Utilizing our own data systems to measure outcomes for jobseekers experiencing homelessness for WDC projects focused on homeless employment services show job placement rates of between 50% and 60% for individuals experiencing homelessness.

For the Employment Navigator program, outcome data between 2010 and 2013 is reflected in the following table:

Employment Navigator Results	King county Employment Navigator Project (April 2010 – June 2013)	Pierce County Employment & Housing Navigator Project (Jan. 2011 – Dec. 2013)
Individuals Enrolled	82	73 (61% of participants were on TANF)
Individuals Who Entered Employment	35 (45%)	37 (50%)
Average Wage of Individuals Who Entered Employment	\$10.56	\$11.00
Individuals Who Obtained Permanent Housing	29 (35%)	Not measured



SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION

Replication would require designated, required housing programs to identify homeless households, while local workforce providers identify staff and resources needed to serve specific referrals. There would also need to be some approach to integrate other programs, such as TANF and Vocational Rehabilitation. We know that programs most successful at helping individuals who are homeless find good jobs are those that:

- Make services as accessible as possible
- Are responsive to the multiple needs of people experiencing homelessness
- Coordinate employment services closely with housing and other interventions.

Beyond these basic components, however, the WDC sees the national advisory group as an opportunity to discuss best practices in greater detail within the context of replication. The national advisory group is an ideal format for considering implementing new programs or practices that build upon the work that has already been done.

SUCCESS STORY

Undocumented migrant, single-mom

C.G., an undocumented migrant from Mexico, and her three-year-old son were homeless for a year and a half when C.G. was referred to the Seattle-King-Snohomish Counties (YWCA) Homeless Intervention (HIP) program. HIP helped C.G. overcome barriers like employment gaps, lack of references, effective job search strategies, and job techniques. HIP helped her obtain an ID, revise her resume, gave her job leads, and develop her interview skills.



After C.G. accepted a full time job paying \$16/hour, HIP then provided resources to C.G. to manage the stress of a new job and identify professional goals. Once she started earning money, she was provided with budgeting and money management assistance so that she could save money and pay first and last month's rent on a new apartment. She managed to stay in the transitional housing program before HIP referred her to the YWCA's Landlord Liaison Project to search for an affordable apartment. CG temporarily moved back in with her family, where she could search for housing and work a job HIP helped her to obtain. Over the holiday period, the YWCA helped her and her son with the Adopt-A-Family program. Most importantly, with help from the YWCA, C.G. was able to obtain permanent housing by renting an apartment.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Twin Cities, MN

(Hennepin County CoC) & Saint Paul (Ramsey County CoC)

COMMUNITY CONTEXT			
County	Hennepin	Ramsey	Total
Community population	1.2 million	511,000	1.7 million
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	3,731	1,500	5,231
2013 CoC award	\$9,204,994	\$5,752,495	\$14,957,489
2013 WIA formula grant allocation	\$4,975,057	\$2,467,441	\$7,442,498
Current unemployment rate	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%

DESCRIPTION

The Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, Hennepin and Ramsey counties, and the State of Minnesota seek to end homelessness through a **Housing First and Jobs Fast** approach. We see increasing employment among people experiencing homelessness as essential to ending homelessness and welcome partnership with the Federal government and other communities to do so. *Heading Home: Minnesota's Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* sets increasing employment as a priority. Our promising approaches for achieving housing and employment outcomes include:

- The Heading Home SNAP E&T Project at the Opportunity Center in Minneapolis is multi-agency collaboration co-locating housing and employment services, leveraging philanthropic resources from the United Way and other funders for providers to deliver services that would be difficult to offer or sustain with existing public funding streams. Since inception in 2011, this effort has served over 890 SNAP-eligible participants and achieved employment for 35 percent of participants completing the program, with average hourly wages of \$10.50 and 34 average work hours per week. Nearly half (42%) of program participants have criminal histories and **all were homeless one year or more at entry.**



- The [nationally-recognized Minnesota FastTRAC](#) (Training, Resources, and Credentialing) Adult Career Pathways approach integrates basic skills education, career-specific training, and support services to meet the needs of working adults. Each local Minnesota FastTRAC Adult Career Pathways program consists of a series of connected educational and training programs that allow low-skill students to advance over time to higher education and employment in a given sector. Navigators offer intensive career and academic advising with supports like childcare and transportation.
- STEP-UP is a job program for youth ages 14-21, which recruits, trains and places mostly low-income youth in jobs with Twin Cities businesses, nonprofits, and public agencies. The program helps interns explore career interests, gain skills, make professional connections and prepare for their careers.
- Hennepin County's Stable Families Initiative delivers enhanced employment services to families with a history of shelter use. An employment counselor assists heads of households in job readiness, developing resumes, completing applications, and providing other assistance to land an interview and a job. A Career Counselor supports participants in maintaining and advancing their position.
- Ramsey County leads *Everybody In*, a regional collaboration of community, business, and government leaders using their social capital to advance high-impact strategies for equity in employment, focused on ending racial employment disparities in the Twin Cities metro area.

The workforce system acts on a mandate to serve all job-seekers and has not created tailored, population-specific approaches or ways to make the workforce system to the most vulnerable members of our community. Performance expectations for workforce services discourage efforts to engage people with significant employment barriers. While Minnesota regularly demonstrates that *everyone* experiencing homelessness can be safely and stably housed, the body of evidence about effective approaches



for improvement employment has not lead to a similar clarity in practice: we are still developing know-how on improving employment outcomes.

Many potential first points of contact exist for people experiencing homelessness with the homeless response, workforce, and economic assistance systems. Coordinated assessment systems to assess the needs of people experiencing homelessness holistically and provide options best suited to end their homelessness are actively under development, distinct for each county (Hennepin and Ramsey) and population (adults, families, unaccompanied youth, and Veterans). The homeless response system, policies, and players also differ between counties, as distinct jurisdictions and Continuum of Care regions.

Hennepin County funds and provides shelter to all families and funds two large shelters for single adults and two youth shelters. Private funders support three other single adult shelters and one youth shelter. People reach shelter by calling 211 or by coming to a Hennepin County service center. Single adults can also go to a shelter to get in. Families in shelter are connected with services immediately to begin the process of finding housing and moving out. Single adults who remain in shelter longer than a week are connected with a housing case manager to access supportive housing if appropriate. Connections to employment include referrals from shelters and shelter-based employment programs to the Opportunity Center or to mainstream workforce services. Transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and rapid re-housing programs vary in their focus on employment.

Apart from the absence of a right-to-shelter policy, Ramsey County's homeless response system has more limited capacity but shares many of these features, and also includes a centralized family coordinated intake process as the front door to its family shelter system. Both Ramsey and Hennepin Counties have street outreach teams, HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) resources, and state-funded Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) grants, which can assist in stabilizing employment to prevent future or sustained homelessness.



Workforce services are delivered through the mainstream workforce system or through economic assistance programs, particularly the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, known locally as the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). Services funded by USDA's SNAP E&T program introduce other variations. Hennepin and Ramsey counties largely operate distinct workforce systems, with a few providers serving both counties. The counties' public assistance programs recently collaborated to identify workforce needs and develop a shared philosophy of service and outcome expectations, which are now guiding funding actions in both counties. This effort introduced major philosophical shifts: serving whole families, not just an adult; providing community supports like parenting and literacy classes, children's mental health services, culturally-specific and -responsive services, and mentoring; promoting lifelong learning; emphasizing stackable credentials to promote career pathways; and confronting racial disparities.

Across these variations, the options for people experiencing homelessness in the Twin Cities to access support for employment proceeds along one or more of these pathways:

- Homelessness-targeted programs combining a workforce and housing focus, like the Opportunity Center (which are rare but promising)
- Linkages to employment services brokered by targeted homelessness housing programs (which focus primarily on housing outcomes, and may lack access to needed employment supports)
- Workforce programs targeting populations with high employment barriers (which might not specifically target people experiencing homelessness)
- Workforce programs tied to mainstream economic assistance programs (which are large in scale but difficult to customize to the needs of homeless populations specifically)



- Mainstream workforce programs (which are large in scale but face disincentives for engaging populations with significant employment barriers)

In addition to the approaches described above, Hennepin and Ramsey counties provide Diversionary Work Program (DWP) services for people as they first access welfare funds. DWP-eligible families receive intensive services that focus on immediate employment. After four months, if the crisis persists, families may be eligible for TANF. Hennepin County has a targeted program for unemployed single adults experiencing homelessness. Participants receive two weeks of pre-employment counseling and then can enroll in job skills training and work with a housing case worker simultaneously to find employment and housing.

Ramsey County designed a sector-based stackable credential initiative called Healthcare Pathways (Personal Care Attendant and Certified Nurse Assistant, with follow-on options for Trained Medication Aide (TMA) and Phlebotomy certificates), a partnership with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, Century College, and area healthcare facilities. . By stacking credentials, wages increase from \$9.00 per hour to \$13.50 per hour. In addition, the Ramsey County Families Achieving Success Today (FAST) program aims to find better paths to employment and family and economic stability for MFIP recipients with disabilities who might otherwise apply to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or have difficulty engaging in employment services.

The target population includes all people in Hennepin and Ramsey counties experiencing homelessness or at risk for homelessness. In general, we believe that employment is important for everyone experiencing or at risk of homelessness, regardless of barriers, disabilities, or other sources of income.

- Hennepin County's 2014 Point-in-Time (PIT) count identified 3,731 people experiencing homelessness, including 1,358 children and 2,370 adults. Two-thirds were in emergency shelter, 27 percent in transitional housing, and 6 percent unsheltered (197 people). Forty-four percent



were women. The majority were people of color: 64 percent African American, 7 percent Native Americans, and 5 percent Latino. Fifteen percent were chronically homeless.

- Ramsey County's 2014 PIT identified 1,500 people, including 986 adults and 514 children. Of the sheltered population, half were in emergency shelter and half in transitional housing. Only 4.5 percent of the total were unsheltered. Fifty-two percent were women, 57 percent African American, 10 percent Latino, five percent American Indian, and six percent multiple races. Seventeen percent were chronically homelessness.

COLLABORATION

Hennepin County's efforts to end homelessness are grounded in collaboration, guided by a ten-year plan founded by nearly seventy community leaders in 2006. The previously mentioned Opportunity Center and the Stable Families Initiative serve as examples of collaborative, silo-crossing approaches. In addition, Ramsey County's financial workers and employment counselors are co-located in Ramsey County shelters to assist with access to benefits, including SNAP E&T enrollment and job placement assistance.

INNOVATION

Although **targeted models** focused on employment for people experiencing homelessness are limited, they are helping to illuminate effective approaches. We see significant potential impact of increased flexibility (perhaps under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) to field, develop, and refine these approaches, and to set appropriate performance expectations for their success. As with the Opportunity Center, **philanthropic support** has been a vital for filling gaps in existing services to create bridges and pathways to mainstream workforce systems, as well as to create incentives for engaging individuals with significant employment barriers. Similarly, **leveraging state funding sources** is an important strategy. In addition to DEED's strategic use of SNAP E&T



resources for the Opportunity Center, Minnesota's Group Residential Housing (GRH) program has been used extensively to house chronically homeless individuals and families, covering the majority of rent and some service costs. Structured as a state-funded income support program, recent policy changes have focused on reducing work disincentives and increasing employment for GRH participants.

FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

The Opportunity Center funding approach described above represents the most innovative model in the Twin Cities for supporting targeted employment and housing supports for people experiencing homelessness, leveraging private philanthropic resources to finance match-eligible services that draw Federal financial participation (\$800,000 to date) from SNAP E&T, with reimbursement distributed to providers by DEED, the state's workforce agency. RESOURCE, Inc. also has a Young Dads program that serves primarily African American men with criminal backgrounds who struggle with homelessness. Participants are often doubled up and do not qualify for other assistance. This program pools Hennepin County, United Way, and other philanthropic support to provide customized services to this population.

For 2013 WIA funds, Hennepin County received \$4,975,057 (across two Workforce Investment Boards: one in Minneapolis and another that includes suburban Hennepin County) and Ramsey County received \$2,467,441. Other funding streams include the Minnesota Youth Program (\$658,325 for Minneapolis/ Hennepin County and \$405,185 for Ramsey County) and TANF Consolidated funds for the DWP and MFIP employment services for TANF families and Emergency Services to address basic needs of families experiencing difficulties in paying their rent and utility bills, which often prevents eviction and homelessness. TANF funds are also used to support housing partnerships initiatives to address housing needs and support collaborations to assist families in becoming self-sufficient. TANF funds used for employment total \$27.9 million in Hennepin County and \$17.1 million in Ramsey County.



CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

Employers are engaged by employment and training programs through established partnerships to link job seekers with jobs. By learning from employers about current practices and emerging trends in their sectors, these programs guide job seekers to relevant training, education, and employment opportunities to advance their careers. Employers also mentor participants, coaching on soft skills. E&T programs identify job openings through web-based research, faxed or mailed job announcements, and extensive networking. Job leads are maintained in a variety of formats. Workforce Investment Boards, business-led boards of community leaders from a variety of industries, connect employers with efforts to employ people experiencing homelessness. Routine engagement of employers in homeless service planning is limited.

DATA AND RESULTS

Minnesota workforce programs use Workforce One, a web-based application to track employment and training services to more than 100,000 customers across Minnesota's One Stop network. It maintains client-level demographic data and employment outcomes like job placements and wages. Minnesota's HMIS is undergoing significant changes and currently has limited connection to other data systems. Hennepin County maintains a shelter database that can be matched with other county data. Hennepin County sponsored research to examine the incomes of families entering shelter and their incomes a year later, using DEED data on wages. Only 29 percent of families earned income in the quarter preceding shelter entry and only 29 percent earned income one year later. This motivated the Stable Families Initiative, in which earned income will be measured pre- and post-enrollment. As this program is relatively new, results are forthcoming. Results for the Opportunity Center are reported above.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

Western Massachusetts

COMMUNITY CONTEXT	
Community population	Hampden 467,319; Hampshire 159,596; Franklin 71,221; Berkshire 129,585; Combined: 827,721
2014 PIT (overall homeless)	Hampden County 2,655; Three County CoC 753;
2013 CoC award	Combined: 3,408
2013 WIA formula grant allocation*	Hampden County \$2,109,95; Three County CoC \$1,599,964; Combined: \$3,709,916
Current unemployment rate**	Hampden \$3,512,146; Franklin/Hampshire \$1,518,105; Berkshire \$926,042; Combined: 4,589,983

*This includes Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth WIA Formula Grant Allocations by county

**Most recent month; not seasonally adjusted.

DESCRIPTION

Western Massachusetts is a large, geographically diverse region of Massachusetts, consisting of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties. The region is the most rural in the state while having two of its poorest cities: Springfield and Holyoke. Like the rest of the state, Western Massachusetts has experienced an increase in homelessness in recent years even while the nation overall is experiencing a decline. Homelessness in Western MA has increased 10% since last year and 13% over the past 5 years.

Several factors disproportionately impact the region. These factors include a higher rate of families in poverty than the state overall, with our major metropolitan area of Springfield, MA having one of the highest rates in the country (44%); high rates of teen pregnancies, with Holyoke, MA having the highest teen pregnancy rate in the state; the highest rate in the state of homeless families living in overflow hotels and motels, where lengths of stay are longer than in shelter settings while services are fewer; and higher rates of chronic homelessness than the rest of the state (16% vs. 11%).



Target populations for our Secure Jobs program are homeless and formerly homeless families, including those living in shelter or motels and those recently housed with short-term rental subsidies, families at risk of eviction and homeless individuals.

Our employment approach is based on three core concepts: (1) integration among non-profit and public programs in employment, housing, child care and education sectors; (2) individualized employment plans that address the specific needs of each homeless job seeker and (3) flexible funds to resolve specific employment barriers such as childcare, transportation and training certificates. Our program identifies and reaches homeless individuals and families through referrals from organizational partners, including housing and shelter providers, state agencies and human service and health care agencies. Participants also contact the program directly based on word of mouth among peers. Prior to enrollment, clients complete a series of appointments for intake, assessment and career planning, confirming that they are ready, willing, and able to participate in program services and employment.

COLLABORATION

Western Massachusetts' employment efforts on behalf of homeless individuals and families span dozens of providers through private, public and quasi-public funding, all working collaboratively under the coordinating umbrella of the Secure Jobs Advisory Council, facilitated by the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness. The region's employment efforts for homeless families and individuals include participation of all four county career centers, early education and child care organizations, shelter and housing providers, community colleges, Regional Employment Boards and multiple state agencies that intersect with the job seeking homeless population.



This initiative began with the vision of the Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation, a long-time state partner in the effort to end family homelessness. The Foundation initially funded a Western Massachusetts planning grant to respond to employment needs for homeless families and individuals in spring 2012. Based on that plan's recommendations, The Fireman Foundation launched the Secure Jobs pilot project, with Western Massachusetts being one of five awards state-wide. This initiative's success inspired the complementary publicly funded efforts that are now underway.

Funded partners include the following non-profit organizations: Berkshire Works Career Center, CareerPoint Career Center, Construct, Inc., Corporation for Public Management, FutureWorks Career Center, Franklin Hampshire Career Center, HAPHousing, and ServiceNet, all of which provide case management, job readiness, training, and job retention services. Playful Minds LC and Square One provide childcare and partner in developing career pathways to the early education and care career field. Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness provides extensive coordination and oversees the Secure Jobs Advisory Council and maintains the online presence for the Western Massachusetts Secure Jobs collaborations. See:

<http://westernmasshousingfirst.org/blog/secure-jobs-connect/>

Corporation for Public Management provides data coordination, hosts the Secure Jobs database and coordinates child care resources with partner and state agencies. MA Department of Housing and Community Development, MA Labor and Workforce Development, MA Department of Transitional Assistance and MA Department of Early Education and Care are all critical partners in the effort. The Continuum of Care of Hampden County and Three County (Hampshire, Franklin, Berkshire) provide their collaborative support in the effort as well.

Along with private and leveraged resources, the Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation, Commonwealth Corporation through the MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLW), and the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) provide funding. These



resources include in-kind contributions from all funded partners, ranging from office space and supplies to database management and career center activities. Additionally, HAPHousing leveraged significant state housing stabilization funds to support a collaborative workforce development initiative for homeless families. This collaboration is detailed below in the “Innovation” section.

The keys to sustaining this partnership are communication and collaboration. Secure Jobs programs optimize coordination of services throughout a client’s journey to full employment. The Secure Jobs Advisory Council meets monthly to review and evaluate outcomes and ensure that all Secure Jobs programs are maximizing resources, building on successful strategies, and troubleshooting challenges. On an operational level, in-person, telephone, and email communications between all workforce development sub-contractors, and shelter and housing stabilization staff are continuous in order to monitor clients’ progress and overcome barriers.

INNOVATION

The Secure Jobs model, based on an unprecedented level of collaboration and flexibility in meeting clients’ needs, is a successful innovation. Each program brings new partners to the table in unique partnerships. With the most recent state funding, every Career Center in our four-county region is now invested in the effort. Each of these four career centers offer unique features that contribute to program success, including a cohort model in which clients attend a three work job readiness and self-esteem building program prior to job placement, as well as the co-location of career center staff and Secure Jobs staff at each others’ sites. These models allow homeless clients greater access to career center services, reducing the barriers to employment that homeless job seekers frequently face.

The collaboration between HAPHousing and Corporation for Public Management in its implementation of the Secure Jobs program offers a powerful example of what resource allocation and service coordination can produce. First, HAPHousing elected to allocate MA Stabilization Funds to employment efforts for homeless families, building on the Fireman



Foundation's private investment and CPM's program model. Secondly, HAPHousing and CPM devised a comprehensive referral system with the local career centers that directs clients to the appropriate program and career center depending on their job readiness. Finally, through ongoing communication and coordinated case management, they supported 191 homeless parents into employment over a one-year period.

Please go to: <http://westernmasshousingfirst.org/blog/secure-jobs-connect/sjc-progress-report/> for the final progress report of this initiative.

Additional innovations pertain to childcare, a critical need for employment success. Working in collaboration with child care partners, the Secure Jobs model allocates funding for "bridge childcare" to provide immediate child care services while working to obtain long-term child care vouchers and/or income-eligible slots provided by the Commonwealth. Finally, a recent innovation includes the development of an early education career track for job seekers. Working with childcare agencies, Secure Jobs is sponsoring two courses and internships that will qualify an individual for child care teacher certification. While building career ladders, the region is increasing its capacity to serve the children of future job seekers.

FUNDING FOR INITIATIVE/PROJECTS

Public, private, and foundation funding as well as extensive leverages combine to fund Secure Jobs: HAPHousing (MA DHCD) \$212,000; Fireman Foundation \$523,000; MA DHCD \$250,000; Commonwealth Corporation through EOLWD \$207,000; Partner agency leverages \$475,000.

When permissible, Career Center partners make every attempt to co-enroll clients in various programs to leverage available dollars. Clients can access Workforce Investment Act funds and services if they are enrolled in WIA and are available for approved training and educational programs. Two homeless clients have accessed WIA funds thus far to support job training and childcare services.



CONNECTION TO EMPLOYERS

The Secure Jobs design includes incentives for businesses to hire, which have proven effective in helping employers to “take the risk” in hiring clients who may not have the skills, education or work history they typically seek. Additionally, businesses engaged in our program frequently exceed the strict role of providing employment to include a more expansive approach with assistance such as: gift cards for successful completion of job training or readiness programs; provision of interview or job clothing; and the establishment of a car ownership program.

Secure Jobs also engages employers through recognition. At a “first year” program celebration event in February 2014, the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, with support from all the program partners, hosted a large public event to honor 13 businesses that participated in the Secure Jobs program. The event included approximately 20 state legislators, mayors, and state officials who attended to applaud the business participants and success of the program’s clients. Businesses also received positive media coverage from every major media outlet in the region. Businesses were eager to continue and to do more in support of this project as a result of this event (which also was key in fueling political support for the public funding that was allocated by the state legislature in June later that year).

Secure Jobs clients have secured employment in private, public and nonprofit sectors. Industry sectors where employment has been secured include healthcare, childcare, hotel and food Service, construction and manufacturing, retail and wholesale, transportation and administration.

DATA AND RESULTS

Data protocols for Fireman Foundation and DHCD funded grants are extensive and tracked by Brandeis University, which is collecting and analyzing all data for program evaluation. We follow the same protocols for all three programs. Data is collected via a customized database. Extensive demographic and programmatic data is gathered including changes in employment, housing and child care situations.



Overall, the collaborations have employed over 200 clients between February 2013 and August 2014. Of the 23 clients that entered employment prior to August 2013 (able to achieve 1 year job retention), 17 remain employed for a 74% one-year job retention rate. Of the 47 clients that entered employment prior to February 2014 (able to achieve 6 month job retention), 41 remain employed for an 88% - six-month job retention.

For more information on the *Secure Jobs Fund & Vocational Training* initiative, go to: <http://www.ppffound.org/pdfs/SecureJobsReport.pdf>

SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION

Keys to our program's success include:

- Design a program where each client works toward their individual goal vs. a design of one training program that must fit all.
- Allow for flexible dollars in order to allocate funds precisely towards each client's needs, including training fees, certifications, driver's license and identifications, child care costs, transportation expenses.
- Work within career ladders in order to provide homeless clients with the immediate income they need while working towards advanced credentials and experience that will allow them to increase their income and housing stability.
- Establish child care prior to employment to increase the chances of a successful transition for both parent and child.
- Develop partnership agreements with all stakeholders to foster collaboration and coordination.
- Meet often and be prepared to discuss the challenges and successes.
- Celebrate! Include clients, businesses, elected officials and community partners in at least an annual celebration of the program's impact on reducing homelessness and building healthier communities.

We are pleased to have been invited to share our successful model with Connecticut partners, including the Melville Charitable Trust, and look forward to supporting its replication in our neighboring state and beyond.



SUCCESS STORY

A homeless, single parent in Western Massachusetts

Stephanie, a 24-year-old single parent of a toddler, lived in a homeless shelter with her daughter, receiving strong case management from the Center for Human Development staff. Unable to secure a stable job, Stephanie enrolled in Secure Jobs, which established childcare for her daughter and paid for Stephanie to receive her Phlebotomy and Blood Borne Pathogens Certifications. CareerPoint staff worked with Stephanie on job search, and she was offered a full time position in a medical office. Stephanie's job required her to work from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday and offered a sustainable wage and full benefits package.

Secure Jobs, through a partnership with the childcare agency Square One, set up a daycare plan that would accommodate Stephanie's work schedule, and additionally, in working with housing partners, helped Stephanie relocate to a new shelter to cut down on travel time to both work and the daycare. Stephanie had settled into a new shelter and her daughter was enrolled in a new daycare just four days after Stephanie began her new job.

In February 2013, Stephanie and her daughter moved into their first apartment. Stephanie currently earns \$13.79 per hour and has perfect job attendance. In October 2014, Square One is honoring Stephanie for her dedication and commitment to her child. Stephanie is planning on starting college courses in January 2015 to work toward her LPN Certification, which is paid for by her employer.

COMMUNITY CONTACT

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